



The **FreshLink**
Family Farms to City Plates

VIRGINIA GROWN

BUY FRESH BUY LOCAL
Northern Piedmont
PIEDMONT ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL • WWW.BUYLOCALVIRGINIA.ORG

save our food

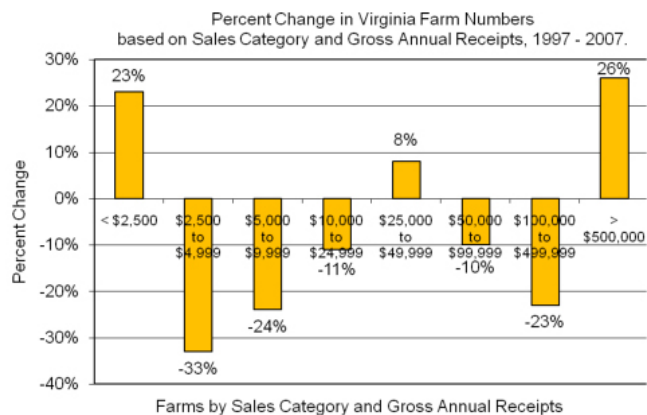
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Virginia Agriculture

- Agriculture & Forestry is Virginia's #1 industry
- \$55 billion & over 357,000 jobs
 - \$2.91 billion in direct output
 - ~\$61,000 average farm gross sales
 - ~\$29 million direct marketing industry
- Average age of farmer is 58 years old

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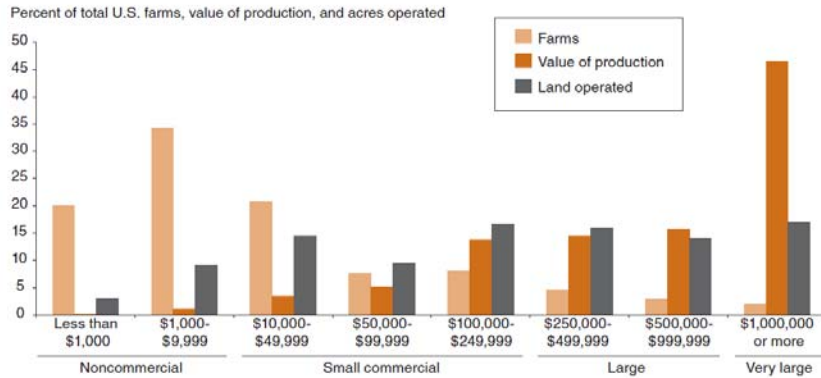
Farm Economy Trend



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Economic Importance of Local Food Production

Distribution of farms, value of production, and land operated, by GCFI class, 2007
Most small farms produce little, while very large farms account for nearly half of production



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Community-based food movement

- Trust
- Transparency
- Food as a relationship and story
- Cooperative
- Collaborative
- Social interaction and connection
- Economic vitality
- Self-determination
- Community-based businesses

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Growth in Virginia's Farmers Markets

Year	Number of Farmers' Markets	Annual Increase (%)	Cumulative Increase (%)
2005	88 Farmers' Markets	##	##
2006	90 Farmers' Markets	2.3%	2.3%
2007	123 Farmers Markets	36.7%	39.8%
2008	134 Farmers Markets	8.9%	52.3%
2009	171 Farmers Markets	27.6%	94.3%
2010	190 Farmers Markets	11.8 %	116%

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Circle of Food System Connections



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Foundations for a Successful Farmers Market:

1. Forming a governing board.
2. Articulating a mission.
3. Developing goals.
4. Determining bylaws.
5. Establishing market rules.
6. Defining the role of the market manager.

(Mainville, "Foundations for a Successful Farmers Market")

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Madison County Farmers Market

- Started in 2006 at Hoover Ridge Park
- 2013 Season
 - 31 producer members
 - 28 weeks, Every Saturday from May to October
 - 7 Special Events featuring local food samples
 - 2 Holiday Shopping Event
 - 7 Master Gardener Horticulture Workshops
 - Farm2Table Dinner for 120 guest
 - Farm2Table Chamber of Commerce Dinner
 - Farm2School Lunch & Breakfast
 - Madison Health Fair and Business Expo Exhibit
 - \$500,000 of local food revenues

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An Opportunity for Local Foods and a New Paradigm

- What if each household in Virginia spent \$10 per week of their total food budget on fresh local food and farm-based Virginia products?
- How many dollars would be generated on an annual basis and be available to be reinvested in local independent businesses and communities?
- What would be the direct economic impact?

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Keys to scaling up to meet the demand for local food

- Aggregation
- Controlling product quality and consistency
- Seasonality
- Matching supply and demand
- Food identity and product differentiation
- Supply chain infrastructure
- Capital
- Capacity and beginning farmer development
- Information flow and transparency

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Piedmont Beginning Farmer Program



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Questions?

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Madison and Greene Agriculture

- Madison County
 - 564 Farms, 224 acres average size
 - Market Value of Land and Buildings
 - Per Farm \$1M, Per Acre \$5,778
 - Market Value of Products Sold
 - \$20M Total, \$35,857 per farm
- Greene County
 - 222 Farms, 140 acres average size
 - Market Value of Land and Buildings
 - Per Farm \$915,588, Per Acre \$6,554
 - Market Value of Products Sold
 - \$7.7M Total, \$34,669 per farm

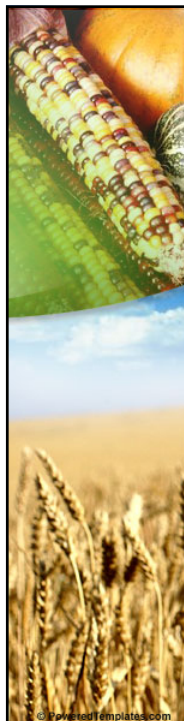
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Farm Link Program

Sarah Weaver, Extension Intern
Virginia Cooperative Extension



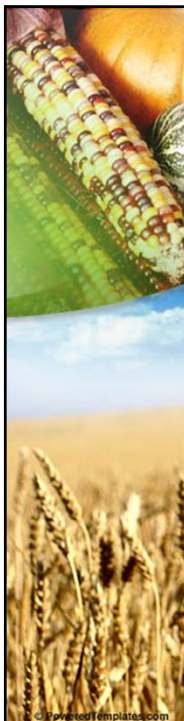
What is Farm Link?

- A way to connect current high schoolers who want to farm but have no land, with people who have land and aren't currently farming it
- Provides resources for interested students to start their own agricultural businesses and be self-employed



What's in it for you?

- A way for you to start your own business and be self employed
- Work experience
- A sense of accomplishment
- Builds responsibility and helps with people skills
- A way to contribute to the local economy



How do you get involved?

- Talk to Mr. Nobblitt, Mrs. Weaver, or Brad Jarvis, the Agriculture Extension Agent
- Let them know you are interested in participating in the program
- Take agriculture and business classes



Requirements

- A formal Business Plan
- Internship
- At least two years agriculture related work experience
- Four classes that are agriculture or business related
- An interest in agriculture!



Timeline

- Freshman Year:
 - **Contact Mr. Nobblitt, Mrs. Weaver or Mr. Jarvis if possibly interested; plan on taking Mr. Nobblitt's agriculture classes or Mrs. Weaver's business classes**
- Sophomore Year:
 - **Line up internships for work experience**
- Junior Year:
 - **Finalize business plans; attend monthly planning meetings; attend educational conferences; achieve second year of work experience**
- Senior Year:
 - **Be placed on a farm; meet with the farmer; set up contracts; plan growing season**



Upcoming Local Food Events

- Greene County Local Foods Dinner
 - **October 17 at William Cox Inn**
- Madison County Harvest Festival
 - **October 30 at Madison Fairgrounds**
- Madison Thanksgiving Shopping Day
 - **November 20 at Madison Fire House**
- Madison Holiday Shopping Day
 - **December 11 at Madison Fire House**
 - **All proceeds will benefit the Madison Literacy Council**